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EXAMINER


BURCH, MELODY M

ART-UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3683

DATE MAILED: 04/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/060,840	Applicant(s) BARNETT, BURTON	
	Examiner Melody M. Burch	Art Unit 3683	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 January 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-7 and 9-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-7 and 9-32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Objections

1. Claims 29-31 are objected to because of the following informalities: the phrase "the switch" first claimed in line 4 from the bottom of claim 29 should be changed to – the switch—. A similar error is found in claim 31. Claim 30 is objected to due to its dependency from claim 29. Appropriate correction is required.
2. Claim 32 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 32 recites the same claim language as claim 28.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
4. Claims 13-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Re: claims 13, 21, 29, and 31. The phrase "a third anti-theft coded signal" first claimed in line 12 of claim 13 is indefinite. It is unclear to the Examiner how a third anti-theft coded signal can be claimed without the prior recitation of a first and second anti-theft coded signal. A similar problem exists in claims 21, 29, and 31. The remaining claims are indefinite due to their dependency from one of claims 13, 21, 29, and 31.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1, 3-7, and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of US Patent 6367888 to Kee et al. and US Patent 4192557 to Leiber.

Re: claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 10, and 11. St. Onge shows in figures 1 and 2 and discloses in the last 13 lines of the abstract an apparatus for locking and unlocking the brake actuator of a dual chamber brake system that operates with compressed air, wherein the dual chamber includes a brake actuator 17 in a first chamber shown in the area of element 21 and a high spring rate spring 31 in a second chamber shown in the area of element 25, the brake actuator being movable in the axial direction to apply and release the brakes of the brake system, in the absence of compressed air the high spring rate spring expanding to bias and keep the brake actuator in an axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system and wherein when there is compressed air in the second chamber the high spring rate spring is compressed and allows retraction of the brake actuator from its forward position to unlock the brakes the apparatus comprising: electro mechanical means or solenoid operated valves discussed in lines 13-16 of the abstract for venting pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 6-7 from the bottom of the abstract and for preventing entry of

- pressurized air into the second chamber as disclosed in lines 2-4 from the bottom of the abstract whereby expansion of the high spring rate spring causes the brake actuator to move into the axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system, the electro mechanical means also being used for allowing pressurized air to enter into the second chamber and for disallowing the venting of pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 11-13 from the bottom of the abstract thereby unlocking the brake actuator and unlocking the brakes.

St. Onge does not specifically disclose that the electro mechanical means is responsive to first and second coded signals.

Kee et al. teach in lines 8 and 18 of the abstract the use of an apparatus for locking and unlocking the brakes including an electro mechanical means having a receiver decoder responsive to a first and second coded signal.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the electromechanical means of St. Onge such that it was responsive to first and second coded signals, as taught by Kee et al., in order to provide a means of triggering the introduction and release of fluid into the chamber to release and apply the brakes, respectively.

St. Onge shows in figure 2 an inlet port or hole in the chamber housing surrounding element 33, the inlet port allowing attachment of a hose 54 shown in figure 1 through which pressurized air is normally supplied to the second chamber and shows the electromechanical means being a solenoid valve, but does not specifically

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show the solenoid valve or brake locking mechanism being mounted in the second chamber.

Leiber teaches in figure 3 the use of an apparatus having a first chamber 32 and a pressurizable second chamber 30 wherein a solenoid valve 23 is mounted in the chamber 30 as shown.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the solenoid device of the electromechanical (brake locking mechanism) of St. Onge, as modified, to have been mounted in the second pressurizable chamber, in view of the teachings of Leiber, in order to provide a means of minimizing the amount of space required by the brake locking/unlocking apparatus to result in a more compact apparatus.

Re: claims 3 and 9. St. Onge, as modified, teaches in figure 2 of St. Onge a conduit 33 being included in the second chamber for venting and disallowing the venting of pressurized air.

Re: claims 6 and 12. St. Onge, as modified, teaches in figure 1 of St. Onge and discloses in col. 3 lines 44-66 of St. Onge the current being supplied from a power source, a switch 69 being interposed between the power source and the solenoid valve, and wherein the receiver decoder controls the switch in response to the first and second signals, respectively.

7. Claims 1, 3-7, and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of and US Patent 4192557 to Leiber.

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Re: claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 10, and 11. St. Onge shows in figures 1 and 2 and discloses in the last 13 lines of the abstract an apparatus for locking and unlocking the brake actuator of a dual chamber brake system that operates with compressed air, wherein the dual chamber includes a brake actuator 17 in a first chamber shown in the area of element 21 and a high spring rate spring 31 in a second chamber shown in the area of element 25, the brake actuator being movable in the axial direction to apply and release the brakes of the brake system, in the absence of compressed air the high spring rate spring expanding to bias and keep the brake actuator in an axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system and wherein when there is compressed air in the second chamber the high spring rate spring is compressed and allows retraction of the brake actuator from its forward position to unlock the brakes the apparatus comprising: electro mechanical means or solenoid operated valves discussed in lines 13-16 of the abstract for venting pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 6-7 from the bottom of the abstract and for preventing entry of pressurized air into the second chamber as disclosed in lines 2-4 from the bottom of the abstract whereby expansion of the high spring rate spring causes the brake actuator to move into the axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system, the electro mechanical means also being used for allowing pressurized air to enter into the second chamber and for disallowing the venting of pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 11-13 from the bottom of the abstract thereby unlocking the brake actuator and unlocking the brakes, but does not specifically disclose that the electro mechanical means is responsive to first and second coded signals.

Examiner takes official notice that it is well-known in the art to use coded signals/remote control in order to prevent unauthorized actuation of a nearby locked brake actuator responsive to such signals. Examiner also notes Applicant's admission of the incorporation of the coded signals to unlock and lock car doors, for example, as being "virtually ubiquitous[ly]" in lines 5-6 of pg. 11 of the specification of the instant application.

St. Onge shows in figure 2 an inlet port or hole in the chamber housing surrounding element 33, the inlet port allowing attachment of a hose 54 shown in figure 1 through which pressurized air is normally supplied to the second chamber and shows the electromechanical means being a solenoid valve, but does not specifically show the solenoid valve or brake locking mechanism being mounted in the second chamber.

Leiber teaches in figure 3 the use of an apparatus having a first chamber 32 and a pressurizable second chamber 30 wherein a solenoid valve 23 is mounted in the chamber 30 as shown.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the solenoid device of the electromechanical (brake locking mechanism) of St. Onge, as modified, to have been mounted in the second pressurizable chamber, in view of the teachings of Leiber, in order to provide a means of minimizing the amount of space required by the brake locking/unlocking apparatus to result in a more compact apparatus.

Re: claims 3 and 9. St. Onge, as modified, teaches in figure 2 of St. Onge a

conduit 33 being included in the second chamber for venting and disallowing the venting of pressurized air.

Re: claims 6 and 12. St. Onge, as modified, teaches in figure 1 of St. Onge and discloses in col. 3 lines 44-66 of St. Onge the current being supplied from a power source, a switch 69 being interposed between the power source and the solenoid valve, and wherein the receiver decoder controls the switch in response to the first and second signals, respectively.

8. Claims 13 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of US Patent 6367888 to Kee et al. and US Patent 4085716 to Minami.

St. Onge shows in figures 1 and 2 an apparatus for locking and unlocking the brake actuator of a dual chamber brake system that operates with compressed air, wherein the dual chamber includes a brake actuator 17 in a first chamber and a high spring-rate spring 31 in a second chamber, the brake actuator being movable in the axial direction to apply and release the brakes of the brake system; in the absence of compressed air the high spring-rate spring expanding to bias and keep the brake actuator in an axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system, and wherein when there is compressed air in the second chamber the high spring-rate spring is compressed and allows retraction of the brake actuator from its forward position to unlock the brakes, the apparatus comprising: electro mechanical means or solenoid operated valves discussed in lines 13-16 of the abstract responsive to signals for venting pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 6-7 from the

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bottom of the abstract and for preventing entry of pressurized air into the second chamber as disclosed in lines 2-4 from the bottom of the abstract whereby expansion of the high spring rate spring causes the brake actuator to move into the axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system and for allowing pressurized air to enter into the second chamber and for disallowing the venting of pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 11-13 from the bottom of the abstract thereby unlocking the brake actuator and unlocking the brakes.

St. Onge does not specifically disclose that the device is responsive specifically to a first coded signal or to a third anti-theft coded signal different from the first signal, for venting pressurized air from the second chamber thereby locking the brake actuator and the brakes and also being responsive to a second coded signal or to a fourth coded signal for disallowing the venting of pressurized air from the second chamber thereby unlocking the brake actuator and the brakes.

Kee et al. teach in lines 8 and 18 of the abstract the use of an apparatus for locking and unlocking the brakes including an electro mechanical means having a receiver decoder responsive to a first and second coded signal, respectively.

Minami teaches in col. 4 lines 17-20 the use of first and second signals each including solenoid energization signals (*plural*) and solenoid de-energization signals (*plural*) or at least two solenoid energization signals and at least two solenoid de-energization signals which would result in at least two signals for the disallowing of venting pressurized air and at least two signals for the venting of pressurized air in St. Onge, respectively.

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It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the St. Onge to have included multiple signals or a first and a third signal for venting pressurized air and multiple signals or a second and a fourth signal for disallowing the venting of pressurized air, in view of the teachings of Kee et al. and Minami, in order to provide a level of redundancy in triggering either the venting or disallowing of the venting of pressurized air to better ensure the locking or unlocking, respectively, of the brake actuator and the brakes.

9. Claims 13 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of US Patent 4085716 to Minami.

St. Onge shows in figures 1 and 2 an apparatus for locking and unlocking the brake actuator of a dual chamber brake system that operates with compressed air, wherein the dual chamber includes a brake actuator 17 in a first chamber and a high spring-rate spring 31 in a second chamber, the brake actuator being movable in the axial direction to apply and release the brakes of the brake system; in the absence of compressed air the high spring-rate spring expanding to bias and keep the brake actuator in an axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system, and wherein when there is compressed air in the second chamber the high spring-rate spring is compressed and allows retraction of the brake actuator from its forward position to unlock the brakes, the apparatus comprising: electro mechanical means or solenoid operated valves discussed in lines 13-16 of the abstract responsive to signals for venting pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 6-7 from the bottom of the abstract and for preventing entry of pressurized air into the second

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chamber as disclosed in lines 2-4 from the bottom of the abstract whereby expansion of the high spring rate spring causes the brake actuator to move into the axially forward position locking the brakes of the brake system and for allowing pressurized air to enter into the second chamber and for disallowing the venting of pressurized air from the second chamber as disclosed in lines 11-13 from the bottom of the abstract thereby unlocking the brake actuator and unlocking the brakes.

St. Onge does not specifically disclose that the device is responsive specifically to a first coded signal or to a third anti-theft coded signal different from the first signal, for venting pressurized air from the second chamber thereby locking the brake actuator and the brakes and also being responsive to a second coded signal or to a fourth coded signal for disallowing the venting of pressurized air from the second chamber thereby unlocking the brake actuator and the brakes.

Examiner takes official notice that it is well-known in the art to use coded signals/remote control in order to prevent unauthorized actuation of a nearby locked brake actuator responsive to such signals. Examiner also notes Applicant's admission of the incorporation of the coded signals to unlock and lock car doors, for example, as being "virtually ubiquitous[ly]" in lines 5-6 of pg. 11 of the specification of the instant application.

Minami teaches in col. 4 lines 17-20 the use of first and second signals each including solenoid energization signals and solenoid de-energization signals or at least two solenoid energization signals and at least two solenoid de-energization signals

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which would result in at least two signals for the disallowing of venting pressurized air and at least two signals for the venting or pressurized air in St. Onge, respectively.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the St. Onge to have included multiple coded signals or a first and a third signal for venting pressurized air and multiple coded signals or a second and a fourth signal for disallowing the venting of pressurized air, in view of the teachings of Minami, in order to provide a level of redundancy in triggering either the venting or disallowing of the venting of pressurized air to better ensure the locking or unlocking, respectively, of the brake actuator and the brakes.

10. Claims 14, 15, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of US Patent 6367888 to Kee et al. and US Patent 4085716 to Minami as applied to claims 13 and 21 above and further in view of Leiber.

Re: claims 14 and 22. St. Onge, as modified, describes the invention substantially as set forth above, but does not include the limitation of the solenoid valve of the electromechanical means being mounted in the pressurizable second chamber.

Leiber teaches in figure 3 the use of an apparatus having a first chamber 32 and a pressurizable second chamber 30 wherein a solenoid valve 23 is mounted in the chamber 30 as shown.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the solenoid device of the electromechanical (brake locking mechanism) of St. Onge, as modified, to have been mounted in the

second pressurizable chamber, in view of the teachings of Leiber, in order to provide a means of minimizing the amount of space required by the brake locking/unlocking apparatus to result in a more compact apparatus.

Re: claims 15 and 23. St. Onge, as modified, teaches in figure 2 of St. Onge a conduit 33 being included in the second chamber for venting and disallowing the venting of pressurized air.

11. Claims 14, 15, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of US Patent 4085716 to Minami as applied to claims 13 and 21 above and further in view of Leiber.

Re: claims 14 and 22. St. Onge, as modified, describes the invention substantially as set forth above, but does not include the limitation of the solenoid valve of the electromechanical means being mounted in the pressurizable second chamber.

Leiber teaches in figure 3 the use of an apparatus having a first chamber 32 and a pressurizable second chamber 30 wherein a solenoid valve 23 is mounted in the chamber 30 as shown.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the solenoid device of the electromechanical (brake locking mechanism) of St. Onge, as modified, to have been mounted in the second pressurizable chamber, in view of the teachings of Leiber, in order to provide a means of minimizing the amount of space required by the brake locking/unlocking apparatus to result in a more compact apparatus.

Re: claims 15 and 23. St. Onge, as modified, teaches in figure 2 of St. Onge a

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conduit 33 being included in the second chamber for venting and disallowing the venting of pressurized air.

12. Claims 16-18 and 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of Kee et al. and US Patent 4085716 to Minami as applied to claims 13 and 21 above and further in view of Leiber and US Patent 5133323 to Treusch.

Re: claims 16, 17, 24 and 25. St. Onge, as modified, describes the invention substantially as set forth above, but does not include the limitation of the receiver specifically being mounted in the pressurizable second chamber.

Treusch teaches in figure 2 the use of a receiver 56 being mounted in a second pressurizable chamber shown above chamber 48.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the location of the receiver of St. Onge, as modified, to have been in the second pressurizable chamber, as taught by Treusch, in order to protect the receiver within the chamber boundaries making the receiver less susceptible to tampering and in order to provide a more compact device arrangement.

On pg. 12 of the instant application, Applicant fails to provide any criticality associated with the placement of the receiver-decoder specifically in the second pressurizable chamber. In the absence of an explanation of criticality, Examiner notes that in *In re Japikse*, 181 F.2d 1019, 86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950) the court held that claims to an application which read on the prior art except with regard to the position of

an object were held unpatentable because shifting the position of the object would not have modified the operation of the device.

Re: claims 18 and 26. St. Onge, as modified, teaches in figure 1 of St. Onge and discloses in col. 3 lines 44-66 of St. Onge the current being supplied from a power source, a switch 69 being interposed between the power source and the solenoid valve, and wherein the receiver decoder controls the switch in response to the signals.

13. Claims 16-18 and 24-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3735834 to St. Onge in view of US Patent 4085716 to Minami as applied to claims 13 and 21 above and further in view of Leiber and US Patent 5133323 to Treusch.

Re: claims 16, 17, 24 and 25. St. Onge, as modified, describes the invention substantially as set forth above, but does not include the limitation of the receiver specifically being mounted in the pressurizable second chamber.

Treusch teaches in figure 2 the use of a receiver 56 being mounted in a second pressurizable chamber shown above chamber 48.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the location of the receiver of St. Onge, as modified, to have been in the second pressurizable chamber, as taught by Treusch, in order to protect the receiver within the chamber boundaries making the receiver less susceptible to tampering and to provide a more compact device arrangement.

On pg. 12 of the instant application, Applicant fails to provide any criticality associated with the placement of the receiver-decoder specifically in the second

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pressurizable chamber. In the absence of an explanation of criticality, Examiner notes that in *In re Japikse*, 181 F.2d 1019, 86 USPQ 70 (CCPA 1950) the court held that claims to an application which read on the prior art except with regard to the position of an object were held unpatentable because shifting the position of the object would not have modified the operation of the device.

Re: claims 18 and 26. *St. Onge*, as modified, teaches in figure 1 of *St. Onge* and discloses in col. 3 lines 44-66 of *St. Onge* the current being supplied from a power source, a switch 69 being interposed between the power source and the solenoid valve, and wherein the receiver decoder controls the switch in response to the signals.

Allowable Subject Matter

14. Claims 19, 20, 27, 28, and 32 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. US Patent 4793661 to Munro teaches the use of three separate switches to control the supply of fluid to control a brake device, but does not specifically disclose or suggest that one of the switches is a proximity switch controlled by the position of a brake actuator and the other two switches being controlled by a receiver decoder.

Response to Amendment

15. The reply filed on 1/29/03 is not fully responsive to the prior Office Action because of the following omission(s) or matter(s): Applicant failed to provide remarks regarding the 103 rejection in view of *St. Onge* alone. See 37 CFR 1.111.

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Response to Arguments

16. Applicant's arguments, see pg. 13, filed 1/29/03, with respect to the Dubois reference have been fully considered and are persuasive. The 103 rejections of St. Onge, alone or as modified, in view of Dubois have been withdrawn.

Conclusion

17. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melody M. Burch whose telephone number is 703-306-4618. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (7:30 AM-4:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jack Lavinder can be reached on 703-308-3421. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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March 29, 2004

Melody M. Burch
3/29/04